

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 TRSE-00 HA-05 IO-13 AID-05 /103 W

-----014647 310221Z /73

R 301615Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6538

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AEMBASSY VIENNA 0040

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1763

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, UY

SUBJ: INFORMAL DIPLOMATIC HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP: LATEST
DEVELOPMENTS

REF: (A) MONTEVIDEO 0249 (B) MONTEVIDEO 1762 (C) ROME 9113 (NOTAL)
(D) 77 MONTEVIDEO 5816 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY HAS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REF A) CREATION OF
INFORMAL HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP MADE UP OF REPRESENTA-
TIVES FROM VARIOUS EUROPEAN MISSIONS, LOCAL UN OFFICE AND
THIS EMBASSY. MEETINGS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IRREGULARLY AT
4-6 WEEK INTERVALS, SUPPLEMENTED BY FREQUENT AD HOC CONTACTS
AMONG MEMBERS. DISCUSSION AT PAST MEETINGS, THOUGH USEFUL,
HAS TENDED TO REMAIN AT LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR, NAMELY
EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND COORDINATION ON INDIVIDUAL CASES
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INVOLVING POLITICAL ARRESTS AND MISTREATMENT. IT WAS
EMBASSY'S TURN TO HOST MEETING MAY 22 AND WE TOOK
OPPORTUNITY AS CHAIRMAN TO DEVELOP AGENDA WITH GREATER
EMPHASIS ON BROADER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. THIS SURFACED
SOME INTERESTING NEW INFORMATION BUT, PERHAPS MORE SIGNI-
FICANTLY, ALSO HAD THE EFFECT OF THROWING GOVERNING
ATTITUDE OF THE EMBASSIES REPRESENTED INTO INFORMATIVELY

SHARP CONTRAST.

2. MEETING OPENED WITH DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS CASES, CONTINUING TO CONFIRM EMBASSY IMPRESSION THAT VOLUME OF POLITICAL ARRESTS -- DESPITE CERTAIN HIGH-VISIBILITY CASES -- HAS DROPPED OF SUBSTANTIALLY IN 1978. WE FOLLOWED WITH PRESENTATION ON RECENT VISIT OF AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION DELEGATION, NOTING POSITIVE RESULTS WE FELT WERE ACHIEVED: AN ATTENTIVE, SERIOUS RECEPTION BY THE GOU; BROAD SCOPE AND HIGH LEVEL OF OFFICIAL CONTACTS; AND SOME REASONABLE HOPE FOR PROGRESS IN RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. WE LAID HEAVY STRESS ON OUR VIEW THAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE MISSION (AND THOSE OF EARLIER NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE GROUP) WERE DUE TO THEIR SERIOUS, NON-PUBLICITY-SEEKING APPROACH PLUS CAREFUL PREPARATION. LATTER INCLUDED ADVANCE WRITTEN COMMITMENTS TO BE RECEIVED BY POLICY-LEVEL GOU OFFICIALS AND TIMELY COORDINATION THROUGH EMBASSY IN MONTEVIDEO. LEFT UNSTATED WAS COMPARISON WITH TWO OTHER RECENT VISITS -- ONE LED BY PRESTIGIOUS BELGIAN JURIST, ANOTHER BY ITALIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION -- BOTH OF WHICH FAILED TO ACHIEVE MEANINGFUL IMPACT ON THE GOU (REF B AND C).

3. THIS LED TO GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR INFLUENCING PRESENT GOU TOWARD IMPROVING ITS HUMAN RIGHTS POSTURE AND GENERAL STATE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES.
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AUSTRIAN (WHO HAS LIVED HERE MANY YEARS), UK AND SWEDISH REPS NEEDED NO CONVINCING AS TO UTILITY OF WELL-PREPARED FOREIGN REPRESENTATIONS. ITALIAN REP WAS CHARACTERISTICALLY GUARDED BUT IN POST-MEETING PRIVATE CONVERSATION SUPPORTED CONCEPT STRONGLY, VOLUNTEERING RECENT ITALIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION AS A BOTCHED OPPORTUNITY. GERMAN (DCM) AND BELGIAN REPS, HOWEVER, TOOK NOTABLY RESERVED POSITION. FORMER, IN TERMS REMINISCENT OF THOSE USED BY GOU APOLOGISTS, SEEMED TO FIND GOU ANTI-SUBVERSIVE MEASURES NOT INAPPROPRIATE TO THE SITUATION. BELGIAN, STILL SMARTING FROM SHORT GOU REBUFF TO EC-9 HUMAN RIGHTS DEMARCHE LAST DECEMBER (RED D), ARGUED THAT VISITS COULD SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE IN FACE OF GOU INTRANSIGENCE.

4. WE WILL TAKE FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO FOLLOW-UP ON ABOVE AND, IN GENERAL, CONTINUE SENSITIZING EUROPEAN AND OTHER EMBASSIES HERE IN A POTENTIAL POSITION TO AFFECT GOU POSITIVELY THROUGH WELL-CONCEIVED APPROACHES ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. ADDRESSEE POSTS MAY WISH TO SEEK OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE ISSUE, ALONG LINES OF PARA TWO ABOVE, WITH FONOFF OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR LATIN AMERICAN AND/OR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE REPORT OF ANY SIGNIFICANT

REACTIONS.

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Message Attributes

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